

Prime Minister Harper,

As a progressive Jewish Zionist and a strong supporter of Israel, I am nonetheless appalled by the cynical and hyper-partisan attempt by your government to try and attract Jewish voters (and perhaps some evangelical Christians) by "defunding" organizations such as Kairos.

While it may not be overtly pro-Israel, I do not feel this organization is at all anti-Semitic, and for Minister Kenney to say so, without any proof whatsoever, was simply outrageous. As someone who has experienced genuine anti-Semitism firsthand I am personally offended by what the government is doing here. The threat of anti-Semitism, or any other form of intolerance, is not a wedge to be used to attract votes in swing ridings.

Furthermore, as a respected and well-established NGO, Kairos does not have to be wholly onside with your government's foreign policy - including wholehearted support for Israel - in order to carry out its mission to help people in the developing world. This is a mission that it has performed exceptionally well, from any rational perspective, and certainly from the perspective of the Canadian International Development Agency, which, until you and your ministers intervened, was prepared to extend Kairos' funding well into the future.

Moreover, I firmly believe that CIDA should be allowed to make its funding decisions at arm's length from government, based on transparent criteria, and without ANY direct political interference. The fact that this has not happened in this case is an affront not merely to Kairos and the projects it supports, but to all taxpayers who expect public funds to be spent wisely and responsibly rather than purely for partisan gain. Isn't that why Paul Martin is no longer Prime Minister??

Prime Minister Harper, I urge you to restore Kairos' funding forthwith.

Sincerely,

Dan Abrahams